

Lactobacillus having the ability of preventing colonization of the intestine with pathogenic bacteria causing diarrhoea and of preventing infection of intestinal epithelial cells by rotaviruses.

21. A food comprising a lactic acid bacterium belonging to the genus Lactobacillus having the ability of preventing colonization of the intestine with pathogenic bacteria causing diarrhoea and of preventing infection of intestinal epithelial cells by rotaviruses or a supernatant of a culture thereof.

22. The food according to claim 21 which is selected from the group consisting of milk, yogurt, curd, cheese, fermented milks, milk based fermented products, ice-creams, fermented cereal based products, milk based powders, infant formulae, tablets, liquid bacterial suspensions, dried oral supplement, wet oral supplement, and liquid tube feeding.

REMARKS

This Preliminary Amendment is submitted in the above-identified patent application. Pursuant to the Preliminary Amendment Claims 3-4 and 7-13 have been amended and newly submitted Claims 14-22 have been added. This Preliminary Amendment does not add new matter. Further, Applicants note that the Preliminary Amendment is not being made for purposes of patentability but, merely to comport the claims to U.S. practice and/or to add additional claims. Applicants do not intend to disclaim any subject matter in view of the amendments.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "Versions with Markings to Show Changes Made."

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Claims:

Claims 3-4 and 7-13 have been amended as follows:

3. (Once Amended) The Lactobacillus strain according to [any of the preceding claims,] claim 1 which is capable [to grow] of growing in the presence of up to 0.4 % bile salts.

4. (Once Amended) The Lactobacillus strain according to [any of the preceding claims,] claim 1 which is selected from the group consisting of Lactobacillus rhamnosus [or] and Lactobacillus paracasei.

7. (Once Amended) A method for preparing [Use of a Lactobacillus strain according to any of the preceding claims for the preparation of] an ingestible support material comprising the step of using a lactic acid bacterium belonging to the genus Lactobacillus having the ability of preventing colonization of the intestine with pathogenic bacteria causing diarrhoea and of preventing infection of intestinal epithelial cells by rotaviruses.

8. (Once Amended) The method [use] according to claim 7, wherein the Lactobacillus strain is contained in the ingestible support material in an amount from about 10^5 cfu / g to about 10^{12} cfu / g support material.

9. (Once Amended) A method for preparing an ingestible support comprising the step of using [Use of] a supernatant of a culture of a [Lactobacillus strain] lactic acid bacterium belonging to the genus Lactobacillus having the ability of preventing colonization of the intestine with pathogenic bacteria causing diarrhoea and of preventing infection of intestinal epithelial cells by rotaviruses [according to any of the Claims 1 to 6 for the preparation of an ingestible support].

10. (Once Amended) The method [use] according to [any of the Claims 7 or] claim 9, wherein the ingestible support material is a food composition selected from milk, yogurt, curd, cheese, fermented milks, milk based fermented products, ice-creams, fermented cereal based products, milk based powders, and infant formulae.

11. (Once Amended) A method [The use according to any of the Claims 7 to 10, wherein the support material is used] for the treatment [and/or prophylaxis] of a disorder[s] associated with diarrhoea comprising the step of administering to a patient having a disorder associated with diarrhoea a lactic acid bacterium belonging to the genus Lactobacillus having the ability of preventing colonization of the intestine with pathogenic bacteria causing diarrhoea and of preventing infection of intestinal epithelial cells by rotaviruses.

12. (Once Amended) A [Food or] pharmaceutical composition containing [at least one Lactobacillus strain according to any of the Claims 1 to 6] a lactic acid bacterium belonging to the genus Lactobacillus having the ability of preventing colonization of the intestine with pathogenic bacteria causing diarrhoea and of preventing infection of intestinal epithelial cells by rotaviruses or a supernatant of a culture thereof.

13. (Once Amended) The [composition] method according to Claim [12,] 11 wherein the lactic acid bacterium is part of a composition which is selected from the group consisting of milk, yogurt, curd, cheese, fermented milks, milk based fermented products, ice-creams, fermented cereal based products, milk based powders, infant formulae, tablets, liquid bacterial suspensions, dried oral supplement, [wet] liquid oral supplement, dry tube feeding, and [or wet] liquid tube feeding.

Claims 14-22 have been added.